



# QUAKER VOLUNTARY SERVICE

**Fellows might be removed from the QVS Program for any of the following reasons:**

1. [LOSS OF SITE PLACEMENT](#)
2. [LACK OF PARTICIPATION IN THE QVS PROGRAM](#)
3. [IRREPARABLY BROKEN TRUST WITHIN THE QVS COMMUNITY](#)

## **1. LOSS OF SITE PLACEMENT**

Fellows may be asked to leave the program if they're unable to continue working at their site placement. QVS relies on site placement income in order to balance the books.

### **What steps does QVS take to *prevent* this problem?**

- Fellows and site supervisors have an opportunity to interview one another before assignments are made.
- Coordinators, Fellows and site supervisors gather on a regular basis throughout the QVS Year to talk about workplace dynamics.
- Coordinators actively work to resolve any concerns expressed by the Fellow or site supervisor. **If you have a concern, please let us know!**

### **Why might some site placements decide that a Fellow isn't meeting expectations?**

- If a Fellow is consistently absent or tardy, the site placement may decide the relationship isn't working.
- If a Fellow's behavior or attitude becomes detrimental to the success of the site placement, the site placement may decide the relationship isn't working.
- If a Fellow's work performance fails to meet expectations.

If a site placement expresses concerns about a Fellow's work performance, the Coordinator will work with the Fellow and site supervisor to create a performance improvement plan. This intervention may not be possible if a site supervisor determines the relationship is broken beyond repair. If the site placement decides to end the relationship, the agreement between QVS and each site placement stipulates a standard 2-week notice.

### **Why do some Fellows stop working at their site placements?**

- The Fellow may determine that the demands of the workplace are overwhelming.
- The Fellow may determine that they've been relegated to meaningless "busywork."
- The Fellow may determine that the workplace culture is harmful.

If a Fellow expresses concerns about a site placement, the Coordinator will work with that Fellow and site supervisor to create a better working environment. This intervention may not be possible if a Fellow determines the relationship is broken beyond repair. If a Fellow decides to end the relationship, the agreement between QVS and each site placement stipulates a standard 2-week notice.

### **What else could disrupt a Fellow's work?**

- A site placement may lose funding and be forced to close or cut staff.
- A change in personnel may leave the Fellow without a supportive site supervisor.

If a Fellow is unable or unwilling to continue working at their original site placement, QVS may seek a replacement site placement.

- The search for a new site placement may take up to one month. If a new site isn't identified within a month, it's very likely that the Fellow will be removed from the program. There's no guarantee that a new site placement will become available.
- Coordinators will draw on recommendations from local Friends and other site placements, contacting organizations perceived to have capacity and interest in hosting a Fellow for the remainder of the year.
- Coordinators will work with the Program Director and Director of Operations to determine how to prorate site placement fees for the remainder of the year.
- If an organization is identified as a possible site placement, the Coordinator will facilitate an interview between the organization and the Fellow (much like the interviews that happen during the recruitment process). Organizations will make a final determination after this interview.
- QVS may ask Fellows to engage in volunteer work or share in the administrative work of QVS during the interim period between site placements.
- QVS will only search for a new site placement if we believe the Fellow has a good chance for success in the new organization. Fellows who've demonstrated poor work performance may be removed from the QVS program.

## 2. LACK OF PARTICIPATION IN THE QVS PROGRAM

Fellows may be asked to leave the program if they fail to participate in QVS Days, Retreats, House meals and meetings for worship, or other aspects of the QVS program.

### What steps does QVS take to *prevent* this problem?

- Applicants to QVS receive a copy of the **Info Pages**, detailing the expectations of the program.
- Dates for all QVS Days and Retreats are announced in advance and may be found in the **Info Pages**.
- Coordinators are available to help resolve any barriers to participation.
- As an additional resource, or in cases where the Coordinator's ability to resolve the problem may be in doubt, Fellows are encouraged to contact the Director of Program.

### What if illness prevents a Fellow from participating in a QVS Day or some other QVS event?

- We expect Fellows to contact their Coordinator immediately if illness will prevent them from participating in a QVS Day or other QVS event. Call in sick, just like you would at your site placement.
- Fellows who are unable to attend a QVS Day because of illness are asked to take responsibility for engaging with the content that they missed. Talk to Housemates about what happened. Ask your Coordinator if there are articles, videos, or activities you can access.
- There are 19 QVS Days in the program year. Fellows who miss more than one or two QVS Days because of illness are missing more than 10% of QVS Day programming. If illness is taking a greater toll on participation, Coordinators may need to ask whether illness has become a barrier to completing the QVS year.
- If illness prevents a Fellow from attending a 1:1 check-in with the Coordinator or Spiritual Nurturer, the Fellow is asked to take responsibility for rescheduling.
- Fellows may be removed from the program if they don't communicate about missing QVS events, or if they refuse to take responsibility for the consequences of their absence (e.g. engaging in materials covered during QVS Days or rescheduling missed appointments).

### What if a Fellow misses a QVS Day or another QVS event because of conflicting commitments?

- During your program year, we expect QVS events to be a priority. However, we understand that QVS might take second place to a family wedding or an opportunity to speak at the United Nations! We expect Fellows to contact their Coordinator immediately if another commitment will prevent them from participating in a QVS Day or other QVS event.
- "They need me at work" is **not** a good reason to miss a QVS Day or other QVS event. QVS has communicated with site placements about the expectations we have for Fellows; site placements know the schedule for QVS Days and weekend Retreats. They know that Fellows have commitments to their House community on evenings and weekends. Fellows should let their

Coordinators know about any pressure they're receiving from site placements to work hours that conflict with QVS commitments. Coordinators have a responsibility to reinforce the boundaries we've established in site placement contracts.

- Working at a second job, participating in a sports league or arts group, or pursuing outside relationships (romantic or otherwise) are **not** good reasons to miss a QVS Day or other QVS event.
- As mentioned above, there are 19 QVS Days in the program year. Fellows who miss more than one or two QVS Days because of conflicting commitments are missing more than 10% of QVS Day programming. If other commitments are taking a greater toll on participation, Coordinators may need to ask whether these commitments have become a barrier to completing the QVS year.
- As mentioned above, Fellows may be removed from the program if they don't communicate about missing QVS events, or if they refuse to take responsibility for the consequences of their absence (e.g. engaging in materials covered during QVS Days or rescheduling missed appointments).

#### **What if participating in House meals, House worship or other community-based activities feels heavy or difficult?**

- At some point in the year, community-based activities **will** feel heavy or difficult. As part of the QVS program, Fellows are expected to develop a deeper and more authentic community by staying engaged with one another through the tensions that emerge. Fellows who refuse to fully participate may be removed from the program.
- Coordinators can mediate, offer tools for conflict resolution, or connect your House community to outside resources. Please communicate with your Coordinator if you feel overwhelmed or uncertain about how to engage others in a necessary conversation.

### **3. IRREPARABLY BROKEN TRUST WITHIN THE QVS COMMUNITY**

Fellows may be asked to leave the program if the bonds of trust have been broken beyond any reasonable hope of repair.

#### **What steps does QVS take to *prevent* this problem?**

- As we recruit and interview applicants, QVS emphasizes the importance of community; we look for people who communicate their commitment to investing in this aspect of our work.
- QVS Fellows receive a copy of the **Info Pages**, detailing the expectations we hold around community life and the restrictions we've placed on behavior inside the QVS House.
- The QVS program begins with a focus on community building and conflict resolution. Throughout National Orientation and the first QVS Days, we introduce tools and concepts like "listening in tongues," the Enneagram, community covenants, and Quaker decision-making practices to help Fellows build and maintain a healthy community.
- Each month, Fellows have an opportunity to meet 1:1 with the local Coordinator and a Spiritual Nurturer. These relationships provide Fellows with a partner for reflecting on community concerns before they escalate to the point of crisis.
- QVS establishes the expectation that each House community will gather for a weekly business meeting. Business meetings are an opportunity for addressing community concerns before they escalate to the point of crisis.
- Coordinators observe group dynamics and work to support the development of a healthy community in each QVS House. Coordinators are empowered to provide additional resources as needed, including outside facilitators. **Please communicate with your Coordinator if you feel stuck or need support in addressing problematic patterns of behavior in your community.**
- If a Fellow finds that relationships are strained because of microaggressions or misunderstandings around marginalized identities, the QVS Equity Team is available for support. **Please communicate with Oskar or Zenaida if you feel stuck or need support in addressing problematic patterns of behavior in your community.**
- If the relationship between a Fellow and Coordinator becomes strained, the Program Director is available for support. **Please communicate with Mike if you feel stuck or need support in addressing problematic patterns of behavior with your Coordinator.**

**Conflict isn't a failure of community; Conflict is a feature of community! What might change the conversation from one about "conflict" to one about "broken trust?"**

- If someone's conduct is abusive or violent, that behavior may break trust beyond any reasonable hope or repair. Please review the QVS No Violence Policy.
- If someone's conduct amounts to harassment, that behavior may break trust beyond any reasonable hope of repair. Please review the QVS Harassment Policy.
- If someone creates a hostile environment by refusing to acknowledge the harm they've caused, trust may be broken beyond any reasonable hope of repair.
- A lack of investment in the process of reconciliation may break trust beyond any reasonable hope of repair. If someone withdraws from conflict and refuses to engage in meaningful conversations about repairing the relationship, the demonstrable lack of partnership may undermine the hope of restoring community. Likewise, if someone agrees to change patterns of behavior but repeatedly fails to honor those commitments, the demonstrable lack of partnership may undermine the hope of restoring community.
- If someone repeatedly or egregiously violates standards of behavior described in the QVS Info Pages, trust may be broken beyond any reasonable hope of repair. Please review the QVS Info Pages.

**Who determines if trust is broken beyond any hope of repair?**

- Whenever possible, QVS will listen carefully to all sides of a conflict and work toward reconciliation. Ultimately, however, QVS is responsible for the vitality of our program and the health of our organization. We retain authority to decide whether or not trust is broken beyond the possibility of repair. If we determine that the overall health of a community requires the removal of a single Fellow, we will do so.